

### LET'S REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, gas prices are too high, and so Washington has already begun to posture.

I know how angry people can become when gas prices rise. I spent 5 years working my way through college pumping gas at Ray's Marathon. And it is important that Washington respond. But we ought to respond with the real answer, which is to reduce our dependence on foreign oil by opening up America's own domestic reserves in the intercoastal regions and the Alaskan National Wildlife Region.

If the U.S. Geological Survey is correct, if we opened up ANWR, we could increase our domestic reserves by 50 percent. If President Bill Clinton had not vetoed legislation opening ANWR to environmentally responsible exploration in 1995, we would be pumping millions of barrels from ANWR today.

Let's reduce the price of gasoline for future generations of Americans. Let's reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

### REPUBLICAN INACTION ON SKYROCKETING GAS PRICES

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, the American people are fed up with us in Congress. They finally see the House Republican majority for what it is, nothing but a rubber stamp for President Bush and his special interest friends. House Republicans simply have no agenda for helping everyday Americans. Perhaps that is the reason we have only been in session for 26 days so far this year.

If House Republicans were really interested in helping the American people, they would join us in tracking and tackling our Nation's energy crisis. House Republicans failed to address skyrocketing gas prices in their energy bill last year. Instead, they chose to follow the President in supporting a bill that gave the oil and gas companies \$20 billion in special interest gifts while doing absolutely nothing to ease the sticker shock consumers face every time they fill up at the pump.

Democrats have a plan that works for all Americans, not just big oil and gas CEOs. Our plan not only cracks down on price gouging but also calls for an increase in production of alternative fuels.

### BUSH ADMINISTRATION PUTTING INCOMPETENT CHERTOFF IN CHARGE OF AVIAN FLU

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, today President Bush is expected to announce his appointment of Homeland Security Chief Michael Chertoff to lead the administration's efforts to combat a potential avian flu epidemic.

Didn't the President learn anything from Hurricane Katrina? Michael Chertoff is the same man responsible for the incompetent, inept and tragically unacceptable response to Hurricane Katrina. If Secretary Chertoff couldn't properly oversee the administration's response to a hurricane along the gulf coast that we knew about days in advance, how is he supposed to lead the response to a flu pandemic that could hit at any time?

The Bush administration is already woefully unprepared to fight an avian flu pandemic. The President's own administration has warned that a worst-case scenario here in the U.S. would entail an 18-month-long crisis in which as many as 1.9 million Americans could be killed.

An avian flu crisis needs a serious and competent administrator to oversee our response. The Bush administration is once again showing it will take a crony over a competent administrator every time. It is time for the administration to show that it actually can lead. It is time they turn away from the cronies and find someone competent for a change so the avian flu pandemic doesn't surprise us the way the expected Hurricane Katrina overwhelmed us.

### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

### CONGRATULATING CHARTER SCHOOLS AND THEIR STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND AD- MINISTRATORS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES FOR THEIR ON- GOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDU- CATION

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 781), congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 781

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality education and challenge our students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public entity that are responding to the needs of our communities, families, and students and promoting the principles of quality, choice, and innovation;

Whereas in exchange for the flexibility and autonomy given to charter schools, they are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for their financial and other operations;

Whereas 40 States and the District of Columbia have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas over 3,600 charter schools are now operating in 40 States and the District of Columbia serving more than 1 million students;

Whereas over the last 12 years, Congress has provided nearly \$1,775,000,000 in support to the charter school movement through facilities financing assistance and grants for planning, startup, implementation, and dissemination;

Whereas charter schools improve their students' achievement and stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools must meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in the same manner as traditional public schools, and often set higher and additional individual goals to ensure that they are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools give parents new freedom to choose their public school, routinely measure parental satisfaction levels, and must prove their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and their communities;

Whereas nearly 56 percent of charter schools report having a waiting list, and the total number of students on all such waiting lists is enough to fill over 1,100 average-sized charter schools;

Whereas charter schools nationwide serve a higher percentage of low-income and minority students than the traditional public system;

Whereas charter schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the Administration, Congress, State Governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the United States; and

Whereas the seventh annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 1 through 6, 2006, is an event sponsored by charter schools and grassroots charter school organizations across the United States to recognize the significant impacts, achievements, and innovations of charter schools: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, That—*

(1) the House of Representatives acknowledges and commends charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education and improving and strengthening our public school system;

(2) the House of Representatives supports the seventh annual National Charter Schools Week; and

(3) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the President should issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to conduct appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate support for charter schools during this weeklong celebration in communities throughout the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada.